

# The Wellstreet Journal

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Los Alamos National Laboratory  
Wellness Center and Positive Health Directions

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## Call Health Connection for your big and little health questions!



The rush of the holiday season is here and it's reassuring to know that your life just got easier, by having one trusted phone number to call anytime you have a health question. *Health Connection* phone lines are staffed by registered nurses 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. These nurses have an average of 18 years' experience and have been specially trained to handle telephone health inquiries. Moreover, *Health Connection* only uses the most reliable information. All instructions have been reviewed by expert panels and approved by the appropriate clinical departments at Mayo Clinic.

*Health Connection* is a health information services line that provides you with quick and convenient access to reliable health information. This service is provided free of charge to you by LANL's Positive Health Directions program. Health Connection services include:

- Answers to basic healthcare questions and concerns
- Mayo Clinic-approved instructions for acute and chronic conditions
- Recommendations for preventive healthcare strategies and self-care tips
- Help in identifying conditions that require attention before they become emergencies

The nurses give you information and guidance to help you decide what to do to protect the health of you and your family. When you call, a nurse may:

- Ask for your name and phone number
- Ask about your symptoms and help you decide if you should visit a doctor or emergency room
- Give information and instructions on how to care for yourself or a sick family member
- Answer your general health questions about conditions, medications and treatments

*Health Connection* is available to LANL employees enrolled in one of the Health Care Plans. Contact Jessica Kisiel (5-4368) to obtain the number or for more information.

## What's the risk of carrying a few extra pounds?

The answer depends on how much excess body fat you have according to a study published in the October 1999 issue of The New England Journal of Medicine. The study conducted by the American Cancer Society measured the relationship between body fat and risk of death though calculation of body-mass index (BMI) which is the ratio of your weight in

kilograms divided by your height in meters squared. This 14 year prospective study included over one million subjects.

Results:

Gender	Lowest Rates of Death BMI Range	No Significant Increase in Death Rate BMI Range
Men	23.5-24.9	22.0-26.4
Women	22.0-23.4	20.5-24.9

### How to calculate your BMI:

Body Weight in kilograms (1kg = 2.2lbs)

Height in Meters Squared (1m = 39.37inches)

*Note: BMI does not take into account the percentage of lean tissue (muscle) or the location of body fat. Two other assessment tools are Skinfold Measurement for body composition; and Waist/Hip Ratio (W/H). To calculate your W/H and estimate your disease risk, see the Mayo Clinic's Health Oasis at <http://www.mayohealth.org/mayo/9707/htm/weight2.htm> or consult a Health/Fitness Specialist at the Wellness Center. Also watch for updates on healthy body weight next month during Healthy Weight Week Jan. 16-22.*

Calle EE, Thun MJ, Petrelli JM, Rodriguez C, Heath CW. Body-mass index and mortality in a prospective cohort of U.S. adults. NE J Med 1999; 341: 1097-1105.

## Newsletter QUIZ?

Test your knowledge from the Oct. 1999 Welcoa newsletter.

1. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, eating up to \_\_\_\_ egg(s) a day is unlikely to have a substantial overall impact on risk for cardiovascular disease or stroke in healthy men and women.
2. The new guidelines from the American Cancer Society recommends that women age 40 and over have a routine mammogram every \_\_\_\_\_?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ are a great source of fiber!

## Preventing Colds - THE SECRET'S IN THE SINK

To keep your household and workplace cold free wash your hands often and well.

- Use soap and warm water.
- Wash all skin surfaces. Include the wrists, fingernails, backs of your hands and between your fingers.
- Rub your hands vigorously.
- Rinse well.
- Dry with a clean towel. Don't share towels with someone who has a cold.

(Above material taken from the Mayo Clinic HealthQuest newsletter September 1999 issue.)

## Health Happenings Calendar

### December...Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Toy Safety Tips for Holiday Shoppers from the U.S.

Consumer Product Safety Commission

<http://familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,1-4061-0-2,00.html>

- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the intended child. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards to younger children.
- For infants, toddlers, and all children who still mouth objects, avoid toys with small parts which could pose a fatal choking hazard.
- For all children under age 8, avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.
- Do not purchase electric toys with heating elements for children under age 8.
- Be a label reader. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide.
- Look for sturdy construction, such as tightly secured eyes, noses, and other potential small parts.
- Check instructions for clarity. They should be clear to you, and when appropriate, to the child.
- Discard plastic wrappings on toys immediately, which can cause suffocation, before they become deadly playthings.

## Wellness Center Update

*Reminder: Health Promotion programs (such as nutrition classes) are available to the entire Laboratory workforce!*

Registration for the Winter Class Session (Jan. 4 – Mar. 24) begins Fri. Dec. 10. There are many returning favorites and lots of new exercise and health promotion classes. Pick up a hard copy at the Otowi lobby or Wellness Center, or visit the web page for a complete listing.

### *A new incentive program and an Open House!*

**Celebrate Health 2000** is an 8-week, self-paced incentive program designed to help you enter the new century with health habits you'll maintain for a lifetime. The objective is balance -- optimum health through practical health habits that you can perform each day. The registration packet contains over 80 ideas in the areas of fitness, nutrition and more to get you started. Each successful participant will earn a great Celebrate Health 2000 incentive (for a small co-pay). For more information or to register, stop by the **Wellness Center 15th Anniversary Open House** on Wednesday December 15 from 11 AM - 2 PM (food and door prizes); or call 7-7166 for registration information.

The Wellstreet Journal is a quarterly publication of Positive Health Directions (PHD) (HR-1 & ESH-2) and the Wellness Center (ESH-2). Comments can be sent to [wsj@lanl.gov](mailto:wsj@lanl.gov) or Marta Gentry Munger 667-7166 or Jessica Kiesel 665-4368. PHD <http://www.hr.lanl.gov/GoodHealth/> Wellness Center <http://drambuie.lanl.gov/~wellness>

## Avoiding Weight Gain over the Holidays

### *Here's How:*

- **Don't set yourself up for failure.** Strive to finish the holiday at the same weight, not losing weight.
- **Enjoy the individual holidays**, but don't indulge as if the Thanksgiving lasts the whole month. Maintain your regular healthy daily habits.
- **Don't go to parties on an empty stomach or skip meals.** Drink plenty of water and eat lightly ahead of time.
- **Offer to bring something** you can eat like a veggie platter or fruit salad.
- **Don't deprive but don't be decadent.** Make several short trips to the buffet table and eat slowly so you know when you are full.
- **Don't take an exercise holiday.** Take a walk or do an exercise video. It not only burns calories, but reduces stress.
- **Don't bake alone.** Invite friends over for cookie-baking parties and police each other on excess dough eating.
- **Eliminate the danger.** Be sure to send all leftovers home with the guests.
- **Don't be too hard on yourself.** If you slip, life goes on; tomorrow is another day.

(Above material taken from The Wellness Councils of America Newsletter, The Well WORKPLACE, November 1999 issue.)

## Wellstreet Food Court

Here is festive appetizer to take to your next holiday gathering.

### HOLIDAY VEGGIE "MOLD"

1 head broccoli cut into flowerets  
1 head cauliflower, cut into flowerets  
1 c. roasted red bell peppers\*  
1 clove garlic  
1 tsp. olive oil  
½ tsp. balsamic vinegar  
pinch salt, or to taste

Steam the vegetables just until crisp-tender, and quick chill in bowl of ice water. Drain well and dry on paper toweling. In a bowl with sloping sides, arrange the flowerets heads-down in layers, alternating colors. Put a plate and weight on top (canned foods work for this), and refrigerate. Prepare dipping sauce: In a blender or food processor, blend the peppers, garlic, oil, vinegar and salt until smooth. To serve: Invert the veggie mold onto a plate and surround with the pepper dipping sauce.

\*Roasted red bell peppers can be purchased or roast and peel fresh red peppers.

--Contributed by Marta Gentry Munger, Wellness Center

Newsletter QUIZ Answers: 1. One 2. Year 3. Vegetables